



# Environmental Fact Sheet

---

## Frequently Asked Questions: Emission Standards for All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)

*In September 2001, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to seek public comment on our plan to propose more stringent emission standards for engines on equipment including forklifts and generators, and vehicles including snowmobiles, off-highway motorcycles and ATVs, and recreational marine boats. This information sheet addresses common questions we have heard from concerned ATV owners.*

### **Why is EPA looking at new emission controls for ATVs?**

Our analysis shows that ATVs emit more than 381,000 tons of hydrocarbons (HC), 1,860,000 tons of carbon monoxide (CO), and 11,000 tons of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) each year across the United States. These emissions help form smog and contain toxic compounds such as benzene, so reducing them would benefit our health and environment. The Clean Air Act requires us to set emission standards that address these problems. These impacts are described in more detail in “FAQ: Environmental Impacts of Recreational Vehicles and Other Nonroad Engines” [EPA420-F-01-030].

## **Must the ATV I own meet these regulations?**

No. ATV manufacturers must ensure each **new** ATV sold meets our regulations. The proposed regulations would apply only to new ATVs produced after a specified model year. Anything manufactured before that model year would not be affected and would remain legal to own and operate. We usually allow several years of lead time between publication of a final rule and the effective date of new standards. Thus, new standards for ATVs won't affect the ATV you bought before this year or any ATV you buy for the next several years.

## **As an ATV owner what must I do?**

You may **not** disable any emission controls installed on your ATV to meet our regulations. Manufacturers will explain in their owner's manual what type of emission controls exist for each model. Manufacturers may also specify some minor maintenance you must have done to keep emission controls working properly over the life of the ATV.

## **What kind of emission controls is EPA considering?**

We are proposing standards that manufacturers would meet on an average basis, which may encourage manufacturers to use a broader array of technologies across their product line. We don't specify what emission controls manufacturers must use to comply with the regulations, but we anticipate many manufacturers will choose to meet them by using four-stroke engines instead of two-stroke engines. Some manufacturers may also slightly change the air-fuel mixture. Others may decide to use a technology such as advanced fuel injection or catalytic converters on some models to meet regulations.

## **How much will these controls cost?**

Your cost for emission controls depends on the control used, manufacturing processes, the size of the manufacturer, and other issues. Most ATV models are already equipped with four-stroke engines, and we estimate the cost for these models to range from less than \$20 to about \$80. We estimate the cost to replace a two-stroke engine with a four-stroke engine is about \$220 to \$350 depending on engine size. But, with a four-stroke engine, you are likely to save money over the life of your ATV because a four-stroke engine consumes approximately 25% less fuel and much less oil than a two-stroke engine. Four-stroke engines are also more durable, so major repairs are less frequent.

## **How will these controls affect performance and safety?**

We don't expect the controls to harm performance or safety. Manufacturers have advanced ATV designs over the last few years, so four-stroke engines now perform as well as - possibly better than - two-stroke engines. Also, manufacturers will have several years of lead-time to perfect designs. None of the emission controls we are considering affect safety. Some people have expressed concern about high temperatures from catalytic converters. However, any catalysts used on ATVs would be smaller than those that have already been used on highway motorcycles for many years without incident. Shielding technology from the automotive industry makes catalytic converters even safer to use.

## **Will these regulations affect where I can ride my ATV?**

No. The proposed regulations don't restrict your use. They cover only the exhaust emissions from your new ATV.

## **Will EPA publish noise regulations?**

We are not proposing any new noise regulations. Most ATV manufacturers design ATVs that already meet noise standards for off-highway motorcycles. But we do ask for comment on whether we should establish separate noise standards for ATVs.

## **Where can I get more information?**

Keep an eye on our web page for recreational vehicles (<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/recveh.htm>) for more information and any developments. You may comment on the issues in this fact sheet or in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) by sending an email to [nranprm@epa.gov](mailto:nranprm@epa.gov).

For further information, please contact Linc Wehrly at:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Transportation and Air Quality  
2000 Traverwood Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
(734) 214-4380